REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Office Action dated May 23, 2002. Applicants have amended Claims 23 and 26 to more clearly point out the present inventive concept. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully requested.

In the present Final Office Action, Claims 22-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 112, paragraph 2 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed as follows. Applicants respectfully point out that the words "with" and "in" as used according to their ordinary meanings in "associating the unique value *with* the unique input device ID *in* a message packet," defines sufficiently and with particularity the step being recited. There, a message packet includes the unique value in association with the unique input device ID. Applicants respectfully request this rejection be withdrawn.

In the present Final Office Action, Claims 22-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,199,048, *Hudetz et al.* (hereinafter "Hudetz") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,220,509, *Byford*. This rejection is respectfully traversed as follows.

Regarding Claim 22, the first subparagraph of Applicants' Claim 22 reads: "providing an input device coupled to the first location on the global communication network, the input device having associated therewith a unique input device ID." Nowhere is it disclosed, taught or suggested in *Hudetz* that the input device (44) has "associated therewith a unique input device ID." Further, the local host computer (28) in *Hudetz* may indeed have its own address but such address would not then be the unique input device ID" associated with the input device of the Applicants' claimed invention, which input device is distinct from a computer to which the input device is connected. Further regarding Claim 22, the third subparagraph of Claim 22 reads: "associating the unique value with the unique input device ID in a message packet." Hudetz, as correctly noted by the Examiner, does not disclose such a step.

Regarding the *Byford* reference, though no citation is given, it is asserted by the Examiner on line

7 of page 3 of the Detailed Office Action that *Byford* discloses the provision of a "client ID associated with the input device." A comparison of the relevant steps of Applicants' Claim 22 with, e.g., *Byford*, Col. 2, lines 35-46, reveals that this is incorrect. First, this is a mis-statement of the first step of Applicants' Claim 22, which first step actually reads: "providing an input device . . . associated [with] a unique input device ID." *Byford* discloses, as noted by the Examiner, a "client ID" which is an ownership ID that has nothing to do with the device that scanned or input the information.

Second, the remaining three steps of Applicants' Claim 22 are as follows:

scanning a product code . . . with the input device, . . . the step of scanning operable to extract the information contained in the product code to provide a unique value as an output;

associating the unique value with the unique input device ID in a message packet; and

in response to the step of scanning and the step of associating, connecting the first location to the second location.

Byford, in contrast (see Col. 2, lines 35-46) does *not* disclose extracting information that is in the product code *during* the scanning step; rather, the host computer transmits the bar coded data to a web server where the data is *then* translated and stored in a database table. Further, *Byford* does *not* disclose associating a "unique value" with a "unique input device ID" *in* a message packet. Further, *Byford* does *not* disclose *connecting* the first location to the second location *in response to* the step of scanning and the step of associating as recited in Applicants' Claim 22; rather, *Byford* just transmits in a conventional manner to the server from the host whatever is scanned, over a connection established by an undisclosed means or process.

Thus, nowhere in *Byford* is there any disclosure or teaching of the step missing from *Hudetz*, that is, of "providing an input device . . . associated [with] a unique input device ID." The deficiency in *Hudetz* is not cured by *Byford's* disclosure and there is no suggestion in *Byford* to combine its teachings

in *Hudetz* because *Byford* has a completely different purpose, to relay parcel tracing information to client shippers based on scanning bar-coded parcel labels at various intermediate locations along the shipping route, using the Internet to relay the information. Applicants therefore respectfully request the withdrawal of this rejection and the allowance of Claim 22.

Regarding Claims 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27, Applicants' Claim 23 recites retrieving from the database the routing information associated with "the output unique value" presented for comparison; whereas *Hudetz* discloses (Col. 8, line 17 - Col. 9, line 65) retrieving all records having UPC fields matching the UPC entered by the user for display at the user location *so the user may choose* a record of interest. In Applicants' invention the routing information is retrieved automatically in the event of a match and the connection to the second location is completed; in *Hudetz* the URL from the database is not loaded from the database *until* the user *selects* it from the list of records displayed; see e.g., Col. 9, line 21 describing step 90 of FIG. 5. Moreover, even in an alternate embodiment of step 90 in FIG. 5, in which a retrieved URL can be loaded automatically, the user must still *select* whether to enable or disable the ability to provide this alternate process. In *Hudetz*, the connection is not made until the selection step is performed, a step not needed in the Applicants' claim 23. Applicants therefore respectfully request the withdrawal of this rejection and the allowance of Claim 23.

Regarding Claims 24, 25, 26 and 27 which depend respectively from Claim 22 or Claim 23, now believed patentable over the cited art, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 24, 25, 26 and 27 are moot. Further, regarding a step asserted under the Examiner's *Official Notice* to be "old and notorious," Applicants respectfully point out that such a step, as is also well known, in a process including a combination of steps does not alone preclude patentability. More is required; however, as has been demonstrated in the foregoing, the deficiencies in the prior art remain. Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of these rejections and the reconsideration of Claims 23-27.

Regarding Claims 22-26, rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 102(e) as being anticipated by *Byford*, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection as follows.

In the foregoing Remarks it is set forth how *Byford* fails to disclose the particular limitations recited in each of the steps of Applicants' base Claim 22. Accordingly, *Byford*, having failed to satisfy the test for anticipation, can no longer sustain this rejection and Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of base Claim 22 and the dependent Claims 23-27 which, depending directly or ultimately from base Claim 22, thus contain all of the limitations therein.

Applicants have now made an earnest attempt in order to place this case in condition for allowance. For the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of the claims as amended. Please charge any additional fees or deficiencies in fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-0780/PHLY-24,913 of HOWISON, THOMA & ARNOTT, L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,
HOWISON, THOMA & ARNOTT, L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicants

Gregory M. Howison
Registration No. 30,646

GMH:jk

P.O. Box 741715
Dallas, Texas 75374-1715
Tel: 972-479-0462
Fax: 972-479-0464
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

23. (Amended) The method of Claim 22, wherein the step of connecting to the second location comprises:

in response to the step of scanning and the step of associating, accessing a database having stored therein a plurality of unique values for a plurality of products, each associated with routing information over the global communication network to one of the plurality of second locations;

comparing the output unique value with the stored unique values in the database; and

if a match exists between the output unique value and any of the stored unique values:

retrieving from the database the associated routing information to the second location, and

connecting the first location [with] to the second location on the global communication network in accordance with the retrieved routing information.

26. (Twice Amended) The method of Claim 23, wherein the step of accessing the database comprises the steps of:

accessing a remote location on the global communication network at an intermediate node thereon;

forwarding the unique value and unique device ID to the intermediate node;

wherein the database is disposed at the intermediate node; and

retrieving the associated routing information from the database in the event of a positive mach and forwarding the retrieved routing information back to the first location and connecting the first location to the second location in accordance with the retrieved information.